

News from the FPPC



California Fair Political Practices Commission
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Political Contributions Skyrocket in Final Weeks of Election ***Over \$500 million projected as combined efforts to influence electorate***

New reports detailing political spending in California show that massive contributions, primarily on behalf of ballot propositions, flowed into campaign coffers during the final weeks and days before the election, according to the Fair Political Practices Commission, California's campaign finance watchdog.

"Campaign spending in California has reached astounding proportions," said FPPC Chairman Dan Schnur. "Whether someone believes that money in politics is good or bad thing for our system, it's critical to make sure that voters have the tools to see where that money originates."

Campaign contributions and spending include:

- Nearly **\$137.25 million in contributions of \$100,000 or more** raised by committees established to support or oppose the nine propositions. These committees received nearly \$53 million, since the FPPC last detailed this information little more than 3 weeks ago.
- Over **\$48.5 million raised in independent expenditures of \$10,000 or more** collectively benefitting candidates for governor, Attorney General, Insurance Commissioner, Superintendent of Public Instruction and three legislative races. More than \$8 million appeared during the last week of their campaigns.
- Over **\$188 million** in combined primary and general election spending by gubernatorial candidates Whitman and Brown, which does not include spending during the final weeks.

These totals do not include the combined spending of all statewide and legislative races, nor do they include contributions received or spending that occurred after October 17, 2010. The final reports detailing this information are not due until January 31, 2011.

"It's been said that when it comes to money in politics, sunlight is the best disinfectant. Well, we have a lot of disinfectant and we intend to keep using it to provide necessary guidance and information to the people of California," continued Chairman Schnur.

Researching the contributions made to support the multiple propositions provided FPPC staff

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with the opportunity to demonstrate the existence of loopholes in the reporting laws. Currently, committees that are established to support or oppose more than one proposition are required to report the cumulative contributions received by the committee, not on behalf of each measure. This does not provide sufficient detail for the electorate to determine how much money is raised or spent for each individual measure and obscures the true cost associated with each proposition. This is one of the many issues that will be addressed by Chairman Schnur's Advisory Task Force.

The Task Force, which is comprised of FPPC staff and many of California's leading political practitioners and reformers, meets on November 17, 2011, to discuss proposals to strengthen the Political Reform Act. More information on the Task Force is available on the Commission's website at www.fppc.ca.gov.

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